




Student Grievance Procedure

Student Grievance Procedure		
Equality Office		
Approved by:	Date	
V1.0 – Executive	22 nd July 2014	



Student Grievance Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

The Dublin City University (DCU) community is committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to have an excellent university experience. In order to achieve this members of the community aspire to a high level of competency, fairness and professionalism. There may be circumstances where university systems, processes, human error or sub-standard performance on a specific occasion result in a student having a genuine grievance. It is the policy of the university to provide resolution mechanisms to address issues that may arise.

In line with its commitment to excellence and continuous improvement, Dublin City University (the 'University') has adopted this procedure to deal with students' grievances that may arise while they are bona fide registered students at the University. It is the policy of the university that students' grievances should be dealt with in a fair, timely and effective manner. In addition information gathered through this procedure will be provided to the University's management so that the student experience at the University can be improved on an ongoing basis.

It is the policy of the university, in as far as is practicable, to preserve confidentiality at all stages in the procedure, in the interests of both the student with a grievance and any members of the University staff involved.

The Student Grievance Procedure provides a comprehensive method for the resolution of grievances. Issues raised under it will be processed in accordance with the principles of full consultation during the process and in accordance with the general principles of natural justice and fair procedures which include that:

- The parties concerned have the right to a fair and impartial determination of the issues concerned, taking into account any relevant or appropriate evidence, factors or circumstances.
- Any individual named in a grievance will be provided with the details of the grievance and allowed to respond.
- A student will not be penalised in any way for lodging a grievance in good faith regardless of whether or not then grievance is upheld. However, where a grievance is found to be malicious in nature actions may be taken.
- Every effort will be made to adhere to the time limits prescribed in the procedure. The time limits laid down *under the Formal Procedure* may be extended only by mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

- The procedure should be conducted as confidentially as possible, in order to protect those involved in the process. Confidentiality should be maintained provided this does not compromise the resolution process.
- No member of the university community named in a grievance procedure should suffer any unnecessary penalty for being involved in a grievance procedure.

Advice and Support

When an issue arises it is important that students seek advice in relation to the options that are open to them. In the first instance it may be useful to contact the Equality Office who can provide impartial advice. Contact made with the Equality Office will not commence any resolution procedure.

Students also have the right to seek advice from or to be accompanied by a member of the Students' Union or a member of university staff at any stage in the procedure.

Process for resolving a grievance

Scope of Procedure

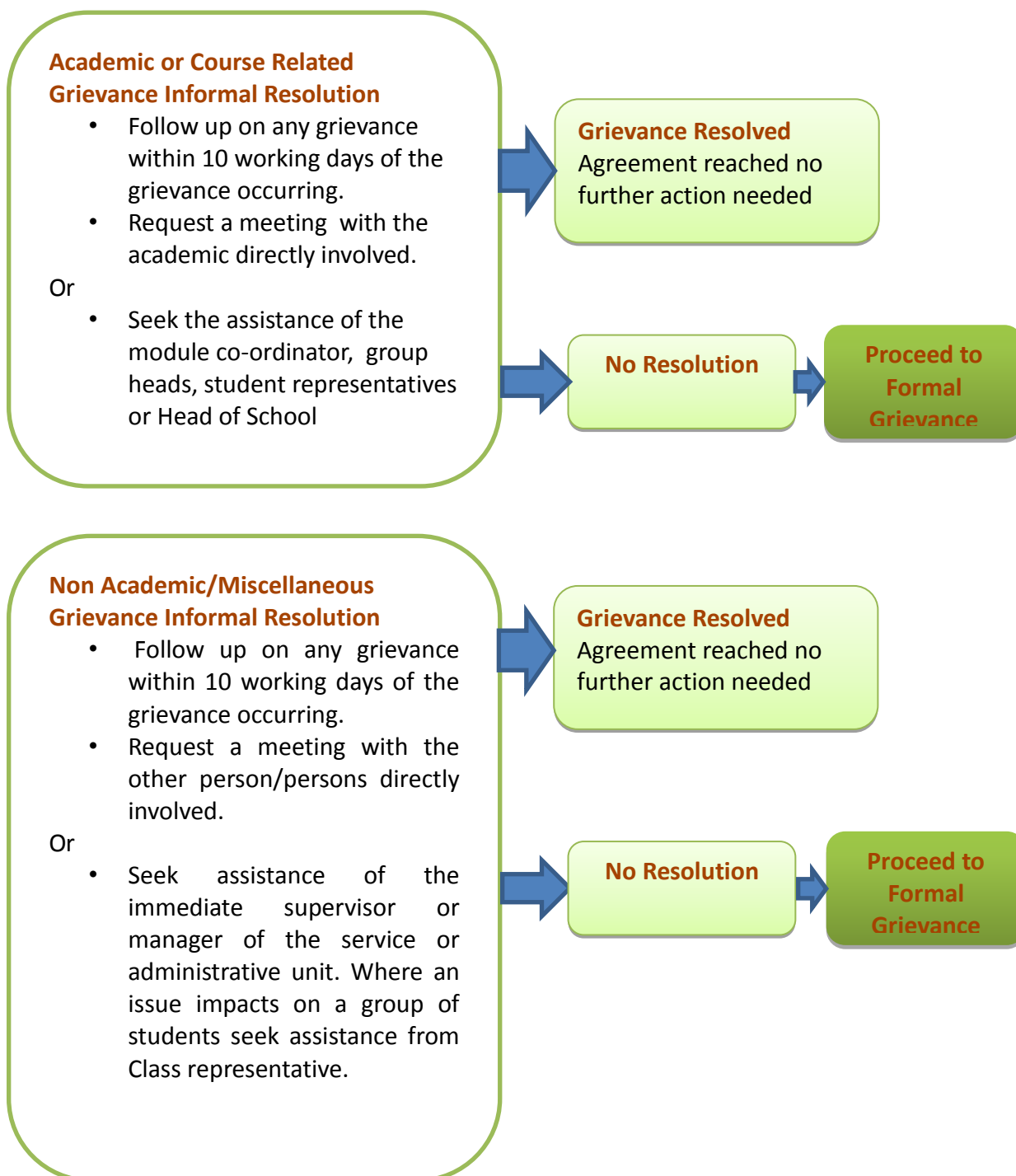
This procedure must be followed when submitting a grievance about any aspect of academic processes and procedures, administrative or student support services provided by the university but does not cover the following categories:

- Grievances related to personal harassment or bullying, involving a member of DCU staff
- Appeals of grades for examinations or assessments
- Grievances about the Students' Union
- Appeals against decisions taken by the Disciplinary Committee
- Grievances related to Campus Companies

A grievance may be made by an individual student or a group of students.

INFORMAL STAGE:

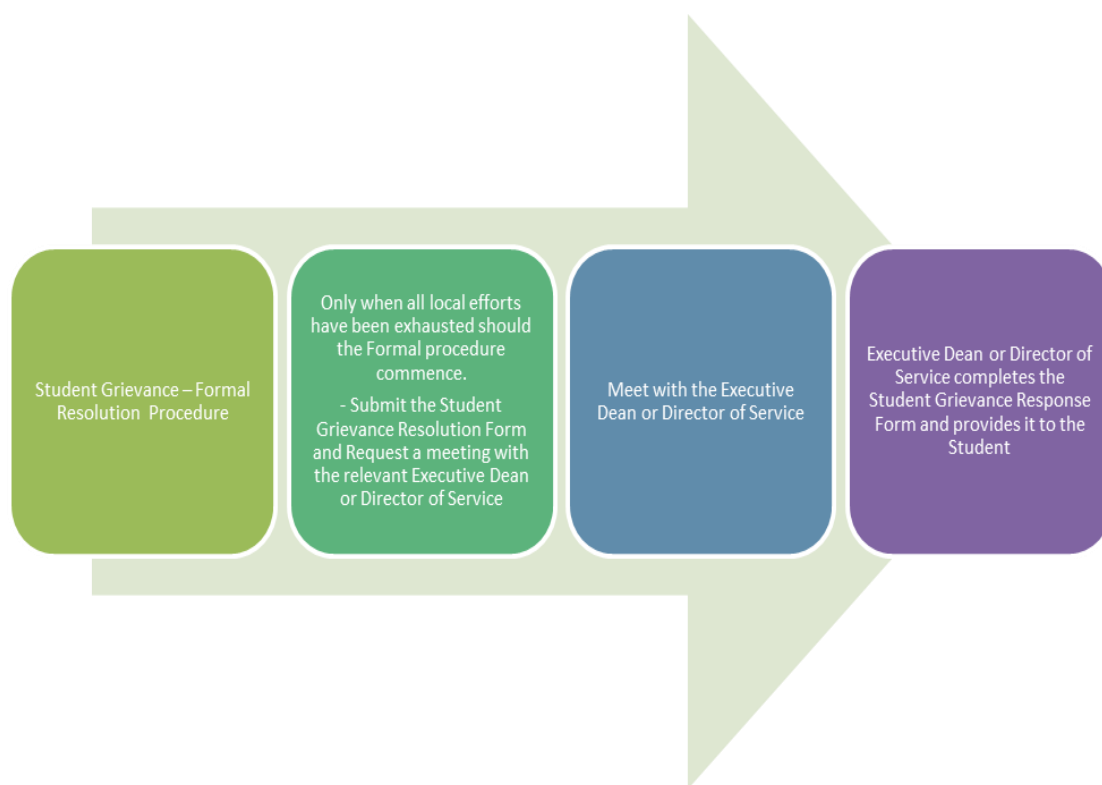
This process encourages an informal resolution at a local level. A student with a grievance is expected to make a reasonable effort to resolve the matter on an informal basis prior to requesting a formal resolution. Attempts to resolve the grievance should be initiated by the student in a timely manner (ideally within 10 days of the incident) which has led to a grievance.



FORMAL STAGE:

Student Grievance Formal Resolution Process should only be accessed after all local efforts to resolve the grievance have been exhausted. The student may then seek a formal resolution by completing a Student Grievance Resolution Form and submitting it to the appropriate Executive Dean or Director of Service.

Where a formal grievance is initiated the Executive Dean or Director of Service will provide a response in writing (using the Student Grievance Response Form) to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the Grievance Resolution Form.



Procedure for resolving a Grievance:

Unless the student feels unable to do so, raise the grievance directly with the person/people concerned. Meetings and discussions between parties directly involved are examples of informal problem-solving mechanisms that are highly recommended. Students who have grievances are expected to meet with the person/persons directly involved to describe (1) the grievance and (2) to the resolution or remedy requested. Both parties are expected to seek a solution that is equitable and satisfactory to all parties.

Where these discussions do not result in a successful resolution, either party may then seek the assistance of the Head of School or Service, of the staff member involved. The Head of School or Services' role is to call meetings between the parties involved, facilitate and inform the discussion as appropriate and move toward a resolution. Any agreed resolution should be noted by the Head and circulated to all parties.

In the event that the informal process is unsuccessful the grievance may be escalated to the Formal Stage. This will be commenced by the submission of a Student

Grievance - Resolution Form. The submission should also include a request for a meeting with the Executive Dean or Director of Service.

The Executive Dean or Director of Service will provide a response in writing, using the Student Grievance - Response Form, to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the Student Grievance - Resolution Form. This time may be extended where due to staff or student unavailability (annual leave, conferences other reasonable absences) it is not possible to complete the process within 10 working days. Where this occurs all parties will be made aware of the delay and the expected timeline for a response.

Grievances dealt with through other Processes

Nature of Grievance	Mechanism for addressing Grievance	Relevant Weblinks
Bullying and Harassment grievance against administrative or academic staff	Students should follow the procedures as laid down by the Policy to Promote Respect and to Protect Dignity	http://www.dcu.ie/eq/quality/respect/index.shtml
Academic decisions relating to assessments or examinations	Students should follow the procedures as outlined in the Appeal against the Decision of a Progression and Award Board	http://www.dcu.ie/register/application_forms.shtml
Academic decisions relating to the progression and examinations of research student	Students should follow the procedures as outlined in the Appeals for post graduate degrees section of the Academic regulations	http://www.dcu.ie/info/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml
Grievances about the Students' Union	Contact the Office of Student Life	http://Life.dcu.ie
Grievances related to Campus Companies	Grievances should be made directly to the Campus Company. Contact the Campus Company for details of local process	
Appeals against decisions taken by the Disciplinary Committee	A Decision of the Disciplinary Committee may be appealed to Academic Council.	http://www.dcu.ie/info/regulations/committee.shtml
Allegation of Research misconduct	Students should follow the procedures outlined in the Code of Good Research Practice	https://www.dcu.ie/internal/staff/research/downloads/CGRP.pdf
Incidents related to the use of social media	Reports should be sent to the Chief Operations Office	http://www.dcu.ie/staff/policies.shtml

Office of the Ombudsman:

Since 1 May 2013 over [180 public bodies](#) are under the Ombudsman's remit for the first time. These include publicly funded third level institutions and educational bodies. The Office of the Ombudsman has jurisdiction to investigate the administrative actions undertaken by DCU. You may contact the Office of the Ombudsman at any time.

The Ombudsman is an independent officer who investigates complaints and where appropriate may make recommendations concerning the administrative actions of the university.

Information on lodging a complaint with the Ombudsman is available at

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.ie/en/Make-a-Complaint/Complaint-online-form/>

Student Grievance – Resolution Form

Please read the Student Grievance Procedure guidelines carefully before completing this form.

1. Name of Student:

2. Student Identification Number:

3. Programme Title:

4. Address for Correspondence:

5. DCU Email Address:

6. Contact Telephone Number:

7. Details of the grievance: (please ensure that all relevant details are provided here, including the date, time and place of the incident, if relevant. Students are encouraged to limit their submission to 1200 words. Additional relevant supporting documentation may also be included if required). Please note that where another staff or student member is named under the principles of natural justice it will be necessary to share any comments or details relating to them.

8. Please outline any steps taken to resolve this grievance. (Attach additional sheets, if required).

I, the undersigned, fully understand that a copy of this completed form may be provided to any member of staff who is the subject of this grievance or who may be otherwise involved.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Completed forms should be returned to the relevant Executive Dean or Director of Service and the Equality Office, electronically and in hard copy.

For Office Use Only: Date of Receipt:

Student Grievance – Response Form

Please read the Student Grievance Procedure guidelines carefully before completing this form.

1. Name of Student who submitted grievance:

2. Student Identification Number:

3. Comment on the specific grievance submitted by the student.

Any other relevant information:

Where relevant, give details of the steps taken by the school or unit to address the grievance. Please include information on steps taken by other staff who may have been involved in addressing the grievance.

4. Findings of the investigation by Executive Dean. Please outline decision and reasons for this.

I, the undersigned, fully understand that a copy of this completed form may be provided to any member of staff who is the subject of this grievance or who may be otherwise involved.

Signed Executive Dean: _____

Date: _____

Completed forms should be returned to the student and the Equality Director both electronically and in hard copy.

For Office Use Only: Date of Receipt:

Student Grievance Resolution Review:

It is anticipated that most grievances will be successfully resolved using the informal and formal processes outlined. However there may be situations where one of the parties involved in a grievance procedure may wish to review the process to ensure that the grievance was dealt with in accordance with this policy. Dissatisfaction alone will not constitute a valid reason to conduct a review.

A Review may be considered in the following circumstances.

- Procedural irregularity in the conduct of the investigation; or
- Due process was not observed; or
- Evidence of a conflict of interest emerges

Procedure for submitting a review request:

Complete the Student Grievance Resolution – Review Form and return to the Office of the Chief Operations Officer <http://www.dcu.ie/ocoo/index.shtml>

Student Grievance Resolution: Review Form

Please indicate the nature of your grievance

- Academic or Course Related
- Non Academic/Miscellaneous

1. Name of Student:

2. Student Identification Number:

3. Programme Title:

4. Address for Correspondence:

5. DCU Email Address:

6. Contact Telephone Number:

Provide a statement describing reason for a review.

What action(s) have you taken to attempt to resolve the grievance ? Please attach a copy of any documentation relating to the resolution of your grievance.

Signature of Student _____

Date _____